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THE

Commonweal

Spring Book Issue

The Catholic As Censor

by William Clancy

Japanese Writers Today

by Donald Keene

The Indestructible Hero

by William James Smith

Anthony Bailey Elizabeth Bartelme Robert Gutwillig
Alice Saxon Jack Patterson
Joseph P. Clancy Richard Hayes Philip T. Hartung

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Books Each Week

The articles on Censorship, the Hero in Literature and the Japanese Novel, featured in this Spring Book Issue, are typical of the wide scope of interest presented in The Commonweal. This week's issue is a special one, but literary articles of comparable perception and quality appear in the magazine week by week all through the year. The names of such recent authors as Justus George Lawler, Horace Gregory, Thomas Molnar, H. A. Reinhold, Bernard G. Murchland, Neville Braybrooke, Walker Percy, Bette Richart, Donald Barr and Anthony Bailey themselves suggest a warm interest in literary and cultural matters.

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Editor
EDWARD S. SKILLIN

Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA

Associate Editors
JAMES FINN
RICHARD HORCHLER

Contributing Editors
JOHN C. CORT
ANNE FREMANTLE
PHILIP T. HARTUNG
RICHARD HAYES

JOHN BRUBAKER *Advertising Manager*

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE ACT OF CENSORSHIP

THE RECENTLY announced campaign of the Catholic War Veterans to exclude certain books from public libraries raises many questions. That censorship involves serious problems in the U.S. has been duly acknowledged for some time. Unfortunately, however, the discussion of censorship has rarely been as serious as the problems. Both advocates and critics of censorship have tended to see this large question in terms of simple issues to which they have offered, appropriately enough, simple solutions.

When, for example, a well-known publisher and humorist appeared on a nationwide T.V. show, he stated that he was opposed to all censorship. When asked to read on the air portions of an apparently scabrous work he drew back and said that he hadn't, of course, been thinking of such books; he had in mind serious worthwhile efforts. More recently, in England, a member of Parliament who is himself an author said that censorship was much like an appendix: when it was inert, it was useless; when it was active it was dangerous.

Many who advocate censorship state the issues no less sharply—or simply. They frequently picture censorship as a wall behind which surges a vast sea of harmful, obscene works. Let one harmful book escape the barrier and the wall will be breached; a tide of filth will thenceforth be free to sweep across the land. It should be clear that neither of these extreme, but typical, reactions is the result of much thought. In the area of censorship, attitudes are frequently stronger than subsequent ideas.

In recent years, however, there have appeared several essays and books which have carried the discussion of censorship to a higher and more appropriate level. In this issue William Clancy discusses the latest of these books, Father Harold C. Gardiner's *Catholic Viewpoint on Censorship*, and he places the problem of censorship within the context of the modern situation, a situation which is marked by the gap which exists between religion and secular culture. In this situation, he writes, "the good 'liberal' fashion . . . is to assign primacy to the procedural over the substantive, while the good 'Catholic' fashion is to assign primacy to the substantive over the procedural." Liberals have frequently been illiberal in denying the need and the right to censor; Catholics, on the other hand, while correctly asserting the rights of the censor, have too frequently been moved by zeal rather than prudence in their actual operations.

NOT LONG after Mr. Clancy completed his article, and as if to offer themselves as an example of what he meant, the Catholic War Veterans announced a nationwide campaign to exclude from public libraries the works of more than forty writers, on the grounds that the books were either subversive or pornographic. Among the authors on the list are Carl Sandburg, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Maxwell Anderson, William Saroyan, Dorothy Parker and Lincoln Steffens.

The list, which is being sent to all C.W.V. posts throughout the country, was prepared by Mrs. Anne Smart, who conducted a similar campaign in her home town. She denied that removal of the proscribed books would constitute censorship because "censorship already has taken place when these books were selected." Further evidence of her approach to the matter is furnished by her reply to a question about Mrs. Roosevelt. "I don't call anybody a Communist," she answered, "but Mrs. Roosevelt belonged to admitted Red-front groups. There is no reason why a dozen books by her or about her should be in one school library."

That the veterans see themselves as fully en-

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trenched in a position of embattled goodness is clear from the instructions, marked "confidential," which went to all local commanders: "Attacks by liberals and the unfriendly press on the C.W.V. as 'book-burners,' 'self-appointed censors,' 'bigots,' or what-have-you, may create static and prejudice against the campaign before we can draw the solid battle line which the good people of the community can form." The veterans obviously see the issue as one in which a clear line separates the "good" people from the "bad," and they are prepared to do battle.

The fault here lies with the organization. No amount of impassioned debate will, or should, convince liberals that this is a proper course of action. The procedure is obviously high-handed and insufficiently motivated by the prudence and care that should attend all attempts at censoring or controlling material. And when the act of censorship is so poorly, if not dangerously, carried out, the question of an abstract right or duty to censor will seem to many highly academic. Such actions and the arguments supporting them obscure the true issues, strengthen liberal fears and place further strains upon our present situation.

PROTECTING WELFARE FUNDS

IF THERE was one pending item of legislation on which it seemed everyone could agree, it was the bill to require public registration of pension and welfare funds and regular disclosure of the details of their operation. In a field where there are almost as many opinions as there are experts, everyone favored this one, and swift passage seemed a certainty. Then things got complicated.

Republican Minority Leader William F. Knowland started it off. Senator Knowland is running for Governor of California on a strong curb-the-unions platform, and as soon as the pension and welfare fund bill was offered he proposed thirteen amendments of his own, designed to reduce labor's power far beyond anything contemplated in the original bill. As soon as this happened, of course, all bets were off, and everyone got into the act—including Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell, who said, not unreasonably, that if Senator Knowland's ideas were to be considered the Administration's less drastic proposals should also get a hearing.

If almost everyone agreed on the original bill, by this time it was hard to find two people who agreed on any one of the various amendments, and it looked for a while as if no bill at all would pass. In the end, though, the Senate finally reverted to its original plan, passing the much-needed bill dealing with pension and welfare funds and allowing Senate hearings on proposals for more sweeping legislation to begin soon after. Under the circumstances, we are inclined to think this was the best course possible. There is no point in risking defeat for necessary legislation, on which substantial agreement already exists, in order to carry on what could be an endless debate about proposals which can be considered more carefully one at a time.

"ADVENTURES OF THE MIND"

THE PLACE of the intellectual in American life is a problem which has occupied intellectuals, if no one else, almost from the establishment of a distinctive American culture. The inherent anti-intellectual and leveling tendencies of a democratic system were first pointed out, long ago, by social analysts like Tocqueville and Fenimore Cooper, and since then the debate has hardly slackened. But discussion of the problem has been necessarily almost wholly confined to the beleaguered members of the elite: no one else even recognized the tension between intellectual aristocracy and political egalitarianism.

Now, apparently, all this is changed. The Russian sputniks have overnight brought about a reordering of the American value-system. And while the role of the scholar is obviously still misunderstood, while his new-found prestige is obviously the result primarily of a temporary national panic, it is nevertheless true that the intellectual's role in American society is now undergoing an extraordinary re-examination, if not readjustment.

The latest manifestation of this phenomenon is a remarkable excursion into "contemporary thought" by the presumably unalterably "popular" *Saturday Evening Post*. The *Post* has begun a new series—"Adventures of the Mind"—which is anxiously and self-consciously described as a "bridge" between intellectuals and "the rest of us."

The editorial justification of this brave step is tortured, and worth consideration. With an astonishing humility, the editors confess their alarm (since the sputniks) at the "chasm" between intellectuals and the rest of society, including the *Post* editors themselves. Non-intellectuals are assured of their own major worth to society, because "without the rest of us" the intellectuals' efforts can never achieve full reality. (Example of intellectuals' efforts: the Salk vaccine.) For such happy results to come about there must be, clearly, a "bridge."

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The introduction to "Adventures of the Mind" goes on like that—alternating uneasily between professions of knowledge for its own sake and wistful hopes for practical benefits, between mass-circulation hard sell and the embrace of virtue as its own reward. It is a strange performance, ironically non-intellectual, and it is all too easy to laugh at it.

But then there are the "Adventures" themselves. The intellectuals who will write the *Post* articles are listed after this dismal shotgun marriage of "popular" and "intellectual" standards, and their names make a list of undeniable distinction: Jacques Barzun, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Francis Henry Taylor and others. The first essay in the series, by anthropologist Loren Eiseley, seems not particularly notable for either difficulty or wisdom, but it does contain ideas. Indisputably there, in the same pages with the silly cartoons, Guestian jingles and three-color ads, threading its way through all the glossy non-thought, is the example of man thinking.

We may be making too much of this. And as the *Post* editors quite evidently fear, the project may turn out to be a spectacular journalistic failure. Nevertheless, that such a series should be attempted at all—in such a magazine, and for such a purpose—is a cultural event of no small significance.

INCOMPREHENSION

THE RECENT deportation of William Heikkila, denied citizenship and termed an undesirable alien because of his past membership in the Communist Party, aroused nationwide but strangely contradictory feelings. Mr. Heikkila was seized by Immigration authorities as he left his job and bundled into a departing airplane without baggage, money or even word to his wife.

Most Americans, we are glad to say, felt that this procedure was ruthless and violent, and were relieved when, after an immediate public outcry, Mr. Heikkila was brought back to this country to appeal his case further and to bring suit against immigration officials. Other Americans no doubt agreed with Immigration Chief Swing, whose angry reaction was to vow to deport Mr. Heikkila "if it takes from now until I get kicked out." Or with Rep. Francis E. Walter, head of the House Immigration subcommittee, who complained to immigration officers, "If he was deportable, I don't know why you're bringing him back."

Strange to say, there are Americans like Rep. Walter, who really don't know why Mr. Heikkila is entitled to due process of law.

POLITICS AND FASHIONS

ACCORDING to the N.Y. *Herald Tribune,* a stylist out in California named Ron Postal predicts an end to the Ivy League look and the dawn of a New Age of Flamboyance if a Democrat is elected President in 1960. "If the country goes Democratic," Mr. Postal said, "it will be in rebellion against Republican conservatism. And nothing symbolizes conservatism more than the Ivy Look."

Sensing real possibilities here, we tried to put the matter to a test, beginning with a colleague who wears what must be the loudest ties on the Eastern Seaboard. The trouble was, though, that his political views were nowhere near as radical as his taste in ties. This development had us stopped, and we'd probably still be puzzling over it except for a lucky accident—we discovered, quite by chance, that our friend was color-blind.

The next subject posed a special problem. For a few days he'd be Ivy League all over the place; then he'd come in as flamboyant as any Democrat you ever saw. Just as we were on the point of classifying him once and for all as politically and/or stylistically erratic, we found out he's one of those people stylist Postal would probably never understand: he just doesn't care. Seems he wears the same suit and tie day after day until friend wife spirits them away, then puts on whatever else is closest to hand. No possibilities for painstaking political analysis here, obviously. (For a short time we did toy with the idea of rating his wife politically on the basis of the clothes she put out for him, but we decided the thing was getting out of hand.)

After careful study of the next two editors, we decided they must have split personalities—politically speaking, that is. They often wear Ivy League suits, for example, but with flamboyant ties, and when they wear flamboyant suits, they always put on Old School ties. This sartorial ambivalence is confusing, and we can't tell for the life of us whether they are liberal conservatives or conservative liberals.

As things stand now, therefore, we're giving the whole project up, pending further clarification from the West Coast. Except for one thing, though—if the editors develop a mad passion for blue suede shoes, we would take this to mean that there will be rioting in the streets and an Anarchist landslide in 1960, and we would feel duty-bound to alert our readers in advance of such a development. Aside from that eventuality, though, we are calling the whole study quits right now, and we want everyone concerned to know it.

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The Catholic As Censor

The censorship struggle in the United States has done nothing to close the tragic gap between religion and secular culture

by WILLIAM CLANCY

WHAT THE SCHOOL question has been for many in Europe, the censorship problem has become for many in the United States: an issue that bitterly divides Catholics from the secular culture of the age. In neither case was it "planned" that way. In both, men have fought to maintain values that seemed to them so obviously compelling that all other "right-minded" citizens could be expected to join their cause. On the one side religion and morality; on the other, equality and freedom of speech. Who but the malicious or the reactionary could oppose these?

But history has conspired against such clear-cut defenses of value. In its complexities, both the education question and the censorship problem (simple enough in themselves) have become parts of those much larger issues—political, ideological, psychological—by which the modern world is fractured. Most attempts to consider them apart from this context have led to their falsification—not in theory, but in fact.

In France, for example, François Mauriac recently asked his fellow Catholics how long they could continue to regard the school issue as a simple fight for abstract justice, apart from the evolving contingencies of French life. Similar questions might be put to many, on both sides, who are now waging the American war over "censorship."

Father Harold C. Gardiner, the literary editor of *America,* at least suggests such questions in his new book *Catholic Viewpoint on Censorship* (Hanover. $2.95). After reading this book one wonders how long many Catholics (particularly supporters of the National Office for Decent Literature) can continue to abstract "morality" from that complex whole called literature, and how long many liberals (particularly supporters of the American Civil Liberties Union) can continue to abstract "freedom" from the total life—the total good—of the community. *Catholic Viewpoint on Censorship* is an invitation for all involved in the censorship wars to return to reality.

Because in this as in all wars reality has been a victim. Neither cause in fact is quite so nakedly righteous as its partisans see it in principle. The gap between religion and secular culture is one of the great tragedies of our epoch. Paul Tillich has written of the "intolerable" modern situation, in which religious man rejects modern culture as rebellion pure and simple, and modern man rejects religion as reaction pure and simple. The censorship struggle in the United States, as it has developed and continues to develop, has done nothing to close this gap.

The advocates of "censorship" have seen themselves as the beleaguered defenders of morality against the massed forces of materialism and cynicism; their liberal critics have seen themselves as the harassed guardians of freedom against men attempting to impose a minority ethic on the national life. Acrimony and confusion have grown while each view was publicly advanced. The "intolerable" modern situation has thus grown worse in our land.

Catholic Viewpoint on Censorship should do much to halt this growth, if it is read carefully by spokesmen for both sides. It will thus increase the debt we already owe Father Gardiner for his earlier *Norms for the Novel,* a collection of essays that, by distinguishing clearly between prudence and prudery, raised the level of Catholic literary discussion in the United States to a remarkable degree. And the present book should raise the level of discussion on "censorship" not only among Catholics, but also—and even more—among liberals as well.

Mr. Clancy, a former associate editor of The Commonweal and now the editor of Worldview, a monthly journal of ethics and foreign affairs, has written frequently on art and censorship.

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THE GOOD "liberal" fashion, Father John Courtney Murray has observed, is to assign primacy to the procedural over the substantive, while the good "Catholic" fashion is to assign primacy to the substantive over the procedural. The Catholic, as heir to a great intellectual tradition, is at home on the level of substance, in what Maritain describes as "the heaven of metaphysics," and this is his strength in any discussion of the essence of things. This strength is everywhere apparent in *Catholic Viewpoint on Censorship*.

Father Gardiner approaches the "censorship" problem from the vantage point of a complete view of man and society. Recalling the West's long-held principle that, in an ordered society, a restriction must be for the sake of freedom, he easily demonstrates that the disembodied "freedom" advocated by certain spokesmen for "liberalism" is ultimately an anti-social thing. Without rational authority there is only anarchy, and in the tradition of the West it has always been granted that rational authority has both the right and the duty to impose some restrictions for the sake of a greater freedom.

So it is in the matter of "censorship." Freedom, in the social order, is not an absolute. Authority has the right and the duty to impose some restrictions upon it for the sake of the common good. Father Gardiner observes: ". . . Society, which has the right and the duty to establish laws for the common good, has, by the same title, the right *and the duty* to exercise coercion. It would seem superfluous to emphasize this truth were it not for the fact that most of the controversy about censorship seems to rest fundamentally at exactly this crux. A great many of those who oppose censorship in any shape or form deny . . . implicitly that society has the *right* to censor . . . [But] the state has not only the *right* but is solemnly bound by the *duty* to censor, under certain circumstances."

Certain forms of "censorship," then, are demanded by the common good. But the modern democratic state is a self-limiting state. In it many of the functions the state performed—and still performs—in a more authoritarian order are now left to the citizenry themselves, acting apart from the official organs of government. In the democratic society much of the care for the common good devolves upon individual citizen-groups, acting on the local level. It is here that "pressure groups" are formed and find their function—a function that is essential to the health of the free society itself.

There can be no doubt, it seems to me (and if there were one, Father Gardiner dispels it) that such organizations as the Legion of Decency and the National Office for Decent Literature play a necessary role in the total democratic process. They take upon themselves those obligations of citizenship which are theirs in a society where the government has limited its area of competence. They are, in the most basic sense of the term, "agents of democracy," acting through argument, persuasion and (yes!) "pressure" to influence the course of public events toward their vision of society's good.

And it is here that many "liberals" become profoundly illiberal. For the sake of an abstract "freedom" they would deny the freedom of minority groups (the Legion, the N.O.D.L.) to advance their views in the community through the traditionally democratic procedures of argument, of persuasion, of "pressure." In this area it has long seemed clear to me that it is not the cultural and moral "pressure groups" but many of their liberal critics who constitute a real threat to freedom within our pluralistic society. In the name of "freedom" they would reduce us to the dull conformity of some Blanshardite order. They would deny the basic rights of citizen groups publicly to concern themselves with society's good through methods that are essential to the democratic process—the methods which Father Gardiner clearly establishes are those of both the Legion of Decency and, in its principles at least, the N.O.D.L.

ALL THIS is on the level of substance, where liberals have much to learn from Father Gardiner's book. But it is on that "liberal" level, the level of procedure, that Catholics have to learn, and on this level *Catholic Viewpoint on Censorship* has not, I think, said the final word. Unfortunately it is on this level that the cause for much of our discontent is to be found.

Granting the illiberal sins of the "liberals," so clearly established by Father Gardiner, granting also the necessary function which "censorship" groups exercise within the life of the free society, granting specifically that the Legion of Decency and the N.O.D.L. are constituted to exercise this function, one is still left with the "intolerable" situation of the modern world: the gap between religion and secular culture. Here, I think, much more need be said than Father Gardiner has written in his discussion of Catholics and "censorship" in our time. This is an area where a "substantive" approach is finally useless, even though it is initially necessary to clear the air of false issues. Here we are in the context of those historical complexities—political, ideological, psychological—to which I alluded at the beginning of this article.

There can be no doubt about it. What "Catholicism" represents for many of our contemporaries is philistia, and for them the agencies of philistia are such organizations as the Legion of Decency and the National Office for Decent Literature. I hope that Father Gardiner's book, with all its reasoned brilliance, will convince many liberals that they have been arguing illiberally, that what they have opposed as "pressure groups" are part of the necessary functioning of a free society. But

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I fear this book will not dispel for many of them the conviction that, necessary or not, such groups must continually be opposed as spokesmen for an at best anachronistic approach to the problems of modern culture and civilization.

And here, I think, the fault lies with the organizations themselves. If the liberals have failed on the level of rational argument, many Catholics have failed in understanding the prudential limits of "pressure" within the pluralist society. And they have failed on a deeper level, too. They have judged as though art would yield to the moral maxims of a copy book.

The Church has always known that art is not subject to such treatment, and has been slow, very slow, to pass judgment upon works of the imagination. The notion of "condemned" art is not a notion congenial to the Catholic tradition, because this tradition has always known that art is not something which can be approached through the easy categories of "condemnation" and "approval." Any man who thinks that it can is not, culturally, a Catholic at all; he is a Puritan. But the public face that Catholicism too often shows in America is the face of a Mrs. Grundy, not a face that is marked by the experience of the high Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

In the matter of the Legion of Decency, for example, what most of its "secular" critics remember is not that it condemned some tawdry "Confessions of a Strip Tease Artist," but that it "condemned," or at least found "objectionable in part" (and thus to be avoided by all "conscientious" Catholics), "Open City" and "Germany Year Zero" and "Marius" and "The Informer" and "Forbidden Games" and—many other of the great achievements of modern cinematic art, achievements without which we would all be poorer.

And what these critics know about the N.O.D.L. is not that it is waging a brave battle to clear local newsstands of horror comic books but that also on its list are the works of Hemingway and Faulkner and Dos Passos and—many other writers of their rank.

It is through such things, finally, and not through the misunderstanding of constitutional principles, that the gap between religion and secular culture is widened in modern life. And in this fact lies an as yet unresolved tragedy of our age.

One resolution, on the Catholic side, might be for "censorship" organizations to conceive their role more modestly. They are not, nor can they be, arbiters of the national conscience or taste in areas where an adult freedom is proper. They should effectively dispel any notion that they are attempting to play the role of arbiters, in the matter of literature and the films, and, perhaps, confine their efforts to the area where they are indeed needed—the area of *obvious* obscenity and its consequent corruption of youth. Because as long as religious "censorship" is open to the charge that it seeks to control, even indirectly, the artistic and intellectual freedom of *adults* within the pluralist society, so long will the division and enmity between religion and the culture of our time grow worse.

ELEVATION OF THE NOVELIST

Japanese Writers Today

by DONALD KEENE

SOME MONTHS AGO a famous Japanese novelist sat opposite me in a New York restaurant. He had published a book in this country which had sold well, and he clearly expected he would be a center of attention in New York. He had prepared lectures and magazine articles to meet the expected interest, but apart from one bored interviewer from the *Times* (who had never heard of the novelist), the Japanese author met with polite and general indifference. As we sat in the restaurant, where naturally enough nobody recognized him, my friend asked, "Aren't people interested in books in America?"

I tried to explain, as gently as I could, that despite the present increased concern with Japanese literature, it was still imperfectly known in the United States and that it would take a bit more time before Japanese authors received here the reception to which they are accustomed in Japan.

For the novelist is today the great Japanese hero. He is followed in the streets by autograph-hunters, his face is on magazine covers, his every activity is reported widely in the press. His rewards are correspondingly heroic: in 1956, for example, four novelists enjoyed higher incomes than any movie actor, entertainer or professional athlete, and novelists have frequently since the war led the entire country in income. From

Mr. Keene, of Columbia University, is well-known as a scholar and translator of Japanese literature.

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the newspapers (which publish daily at least two serialized novels), from the hundreds of literary magazines, and from the film industry (now the largest in the world) pours an increased stream of commissions which gives work not only to the famous writers but to innumerable second-raters and even hacks.

The output of the novelists, geared to this demand, is often prodigious; one famous writer has already published ninety-six novels and is still going strong. He is said to be able to write the equivalent of ten thousand words a day with ease. The public's enthusiasm for novels seems to grow all the time, and a hundred thousand copies is not an unusual sale for a popular work. At least three or four books each year sell over three hundred thousand copies. It is small wonder that when a Japanese youth announces to his parents his intention of becoming a novelist he is likely to meet with encouragement.

The Japanese fondness for the novel extends as well to foreign literatures and authors. Last year when the P.E.N. Congress was held in Tokyo, school children and labor unions as well as banks and manufacturers contributed to the expenses, and the foreign delegates were all treated as great celebrities. The P.E.N. Club's congresses in various European cities have sometimes gone almost unnoticed, and most Americans seem unaware even of the existence of the club, but the Japanese press was saturated for months with news of this congress. The foreign novelist who visits Japan (unlike the Japanese novelist visiting America) can be certain of a handsome reception.

THE ELEVATION of the novelist to his present eminence seems to be largely a post-war phenomenon. A product of the development of mass media, it has in turn contributed to this development. For example, during the seven years that *The Heike Story* by Eiji Yoshikawa was being serialized in the weekly *Asahi,* the circulation of the magazine shot up from about a hundred thousand to several millions. Of course Yoshikawa's novel was not the only cause, but the successive episodes of the book were read with much the fervor aroused in this country by the comic strip.

The amazing success of serialized fiction has been explained by some sociologists in terms of the long hours spent in street-cars and trains by the Japanese. No doubt this is part of the reason, but it does not explain why the literary level of these time-killers is so much higher in Japan than that of comparable fiction in the United States. I believe that it reflects the admiration for "superior" culture which is a part of the Confucian tradition in Japan, an admiration which in the recent past has even led to the appearance at the top of best-seller lists of volumes from the collected works of a recondite philosopher. A surprisingly large part of the Japanese reading public will not only suffer but even welcome novels on quite difficult subjects.

Nevertheless, many Japanese novelists must accommodate themselves now not only to the potential audience of a hundred thousand for books, but to a newspaper readership numbering in the millions. Some successful writers are purely and simply creators of pulp fiction, but there are others so anxious to preserve their reputations as serious writers that they refuse to allow their serialized novels to be published in book form. Very few writers, however, decline to participate in the lucrative rat-race of serial publication.

American authors are apt to envy this extraordinary demand for novels, and some have recalled to me how Dickens also published his works serially. It should not be overlooked, however, that the size of the audience makes it much harder for a Japanese novelist to write as he pleases—much harder than it was for Dickens. The insatiable public appetite for literature supports many Japanese writers, it is true, but only by destroying them as writers.

And it is hard to compare the quality of post-war literature in Japan and the West, if only because the quantity produced by important Japanese writers is so much greater than that of their counterparts. I cannot imagine William Faulkner, say, publishing two or three novels each year, of which one had been serialized in a chain of newspapers, and another in a popular magazine; yet this is very much the case with Yasunari Kawabata, one of the best Japanese novelists (whose *Snow Country* has attracted much favorable attention here). Not only do the novelists publish large quantities of fiction, but the older ones grind out volumes of reminiscences, and the younger ones essays on political and even economic problems. The picture is further complicated by a special Japanese invention in the world of fiction, the *shishôsetsu,* or "I novel." These are minutely accurate descriptions of the author's own experiences, and often demand an interest in the author's personality before one can take pleasure in the book. Nevertheless, the *shishôsetsu* is not only recognized as a possible means of expression but considered a particularly serious and important one. Some authors who publish popular novels in the newspapers redeem themselves in the eyes of the literary profession by an occasional *shishôsetsu.* It is, consequently, hard indeed to find points of comparison with writing in other countries; in other words, the Japanese have evolved a modern literature distinctively their own.

This does not mean that Western influence has ceased or that the Japanese are now indifferent to literary currents in the West. On the contrary, they are reading and translating Western literature as eagerly as ever. Three complete translations of *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* exist and, even more astonishingly, two of *Ulysses.* Modern French literature in particular

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is admired; a common experience of literary Americans in Japan is to be asked opinions of French novelists and poets whose names the Americans barely know. The French influence (with the possible exception of Sartre) is less likely to come from post-war figures than from the writers of the twenties and thirties. American literary influence is negligible, and the only British novelist whose work still seems to inspire Japanese authors is D. H. Lawrence. Despite the thunder from the left, no major writer is influenced by Soviet or Communist Chinese literature.

JAPANESE NOVELS today fall into two main categories: the conservative, by men whose interests are essentially literary, and the "progressive," by men who consider the novel to be a means of effecting social change. As it happens, virtually all the good writers belong to the former category, though this may not be inevitable. "Progressive" writers are almost uniformly cursed with atrocious styles, and their deadly earnestness chills even readers sympathetic to their causes. A successful left-wing novel is likely to portray a middle-aged man's unhappiness over his economic and sexual difficulties; it is not likely to be a study of downtrodden workers.

Despite the prevailingly leftist inclinations of the intelligentsia, the "progressive" novel has not enjoyed general popularity up to now, a fact resulting in part from the special conditions of publication in newspapers. When a "progressive" novelist publishes in a mass medium, his audience is probably interested less in a message than in day-to-day developments in the story; he cannot devote pages to monologues on the futility of the capitalist system. On the other hand, if he follows the more leisurely pace of serial publication in a magazine (novels unserialized prior to publication are relatively unusual), he all too often destroys the literary quality of his book by indulging in long expositions of views which he presumes will be congenial to readers of the magazine.

If one reads the Japanese critics, however, one finds an entirely disproportionate attention given to the "progressives." Many critics are convinced that the novel has a mission: to depict Japan's struggles today under the "contradictions" of a corrupt capitalist economy. They accordingly praise any novel, however poorly executed, which meets this specification, ignoring or praising only faintly the works by acknowledged masters. They are also very anxious for "progressive" novels to be better known abroad, and they complain on occasion that thus far only unrepresentative, "old-fashioned" examples of modern Japanese literature have been translated.

As a matter of fact, at least one "progressive" novel is available in English, *Zone of Emptiness* by Hiroshi Noma. The author, whose "broad social concept" is lauded on the dust jacket, is avowedly a Communist, but the novel itself deals less with ideologies than with the shocking realities of the Japanese army in 1945. The fact that life in the army is hell (a fact well-attested by numerous, better-written books) emerges from this novel, but we are apt to be more powerfully struck by the peculiar brutality of the characters, even those intended to be sympathetic. Such a book may in a sense lead us to a better understanding of the Japanese, but it will hardly create a greater appreciation. One has only to contrast it with a truly great war novel, Shohei Ooka's *Fires on the Plain,* to see how Ooka's depth makes Noma's broad social concept seem paper-thin.

Almost all the translations from the Japanese which have been published in this country represent the choice of the American or the Englishman who translated the particular work. This is not surprising: translating from the Japanese is so arduous a task that unless one believes in the book the translation becomes a horrible nightmare. This means inevitably that novels distasteful to the translators may be neglected—for example, a work describing the life of a white collar worker who is thoroughly depersonalized by the monotonous routine of his life. Such a novel may be more typical of Japan today than one which captures the peculiar Japanese sensitivity to nature and to subtle changes in the emotions, but it is difficult to blame anyone for preferring to translate (or to read) the latter.

EVEN THOUGH none of the Japanese novels published in this country during the past few years has become a best seller, an awareness of modern Japanese literature has suddenly grown. Credit goes largely to Harold Strauss, the editor-in-chief at Knopf, for initiating the publication of a series of Japanese novels, the first to appear in this country in thirty years. This new series began with *Homecoming,* a novel by Jiro Osaragi, chosen because it served in a sense as an introduction to Japanese culture. This book sold rather well, but the next translation, *Some Prefer Nettles* by Junichiro Tanizaki, a much superior novel (and indeed a modern classic), sold poorly despite critical acclaim. Apparently it was too Japanese for most American readers, who were bewildered by a lack of explicitness,

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particularly in the ending. A second Tanizaki novel, *The Makioka Sisters,* should certainly be explicit enough for any reader interested in knowing about the life of a Japanese family in the years before the war.

Tanizaki is a dean of modern Japanese literature; at the other end of the age scale is Yukio Mishima (born 1925), whose *The Sound of Waves* has sold better than any other Japanese novel here. This novel has been welcomed as the pleasant love story of a fisher boy and a diver girl, but it was actually planned by Mishima almost as a literary exercise—to see whether he could take the oldest and most familiar boy-meets-girl situation (it is modelled on *Daphnis and Chloe*) and make it live again through the evocative power of the Japanese atmosphere. Mishima succeeded brilliantly, and his novel deserves its popularity. He is, in fact, Japan's leading writer of today and the great hope for the future.

Another writer whose works have attracted considerable notice in the U.S. is Osamu Dazai. His world is that of the declining artistocracy and the embittered intellectuals, the disillusioned radicals and the drunken failures. This cast of characters suggests Chekhov or possibly post-war France, and comparisons would not be entirely misplaced, but there is a Japanese sensibility working in the choice and presentation of the material. A Dazai novel is at once immediately intelligible in Western terms and quite unlike any Western books.

Easy intelligibility is indeed one of the most important criteria in the selection of works for translation. A Japanese novel which seems to smack too much of the Mysterious East will never make its way with the public (even though its very mysteriousness may attract some admirers). On the other hand, if a novel hardly differs from a Western one in its characters and situations, it is likely to be dismissed as a mere imitation. The fact is that all Japanese novels being written today are to a greater or lesser degree under European influence. Japan's traditional literature is of little interest to most writers, whose long familiarity with such writers as Dostoevsky and Chekhov has made them a part of their own flesh and blood. The contemporary Japanese novel is likely to be at the same time surprisingly close and yet remote, depending on the way essentially Western ideas have been blended into a Japanese atmosphere. The translator must find works in which the parts that are close do not seem ludicrously incongruous, and the parts that are remote do not baffle.

Nobody can say for sure whether or not Japanese novels will hold their place in our interest once the present vogue for things Japanese has subsided, but I think that the critical reception thus far shows that they offer something new to our literary fare. The extraordinary vitality of all forms of writing in Japan today also seems to ensure that we will not again shut our eyes to a literature which we have so long neglected.

ALWAYS DYING, NEVER DEAD

The Indestructible Hero

by WILLIAM JAMES SMITH

SURELY one of the most lovable evidences of the general naiveté of the literary mind is that it constantly addresses itself to such questions as, "Is the novel a defunct art form?" Or, "Whither the classic hero?" Last year Granville Hicks edited *The Living Novel* (Macmillan. $4.50.), an interesting symposium on the first question and more recently, in *The Vanishing Hero* (Atlantic-Little, Brown. $3.75.), Sean O'Faolain has considered the latter problem at some length. The Is-the-novel-dead? bit usually revolves around the question, "Where do we go from *Finnegans Wake?*" Or it used to before the suspicion arose that *Finnegans Wake* was more the product of insanity than of genius. The earlier questions in the same vein, "Where do we go from *Ulysses?*" or "Where do we go from Proust?" had more of a seeming reasonableness about them. In their dazzling newness these works had an air of finality—the magic finality of superlative skill—which suggested that all that followed would be childish imitation or childish ineptitude and would wither away in a world that had known the supreme experience.

Of course everyone recognizes that much of the presumptive naiveté of questions concerning the life of the novel was a mere mask, an excuse for some pleasant literary talk. No one (with the possible exception of T. S. Eliot) really believed the novel was through, or failed to recognize that its survival de-

Mr. Smith is a member of the editorial staff of the *Atomic Industrial Forum.*

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pended far more on sociological than upon esthetic considerations. Should the world decline to savage illiteracy the novel might go its way and we might return to, say, epic verse for literary entertainment. But the novel will never die of embarrassment because the best one has been written.

The question concerning the hero, which Mr. O'Faolain raises in his book, is more properly an esthetic one, and even more a psychological one. Mr. O'Faolain discusses eight novelists "of the twenties": Aldous Huxley, Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Elizabeth Bowen, Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. Some of these writers are dubiously novelists "of the twenties," but Mr. O'Faolain is well aware of that and the selection does not call for quibbling. Delivered originally as lectures at Princeton as part of the Christian Gauss Seminars in Criticism, the essays are in many ways so percipient and so amiably unostentatious even when they veer in strange directions that to quarrel seriously with Mr. O'Faolain's thesis would only seem ungracious, especially when the thesis seems to have been added as an afterthought with a touch of Irish flippancy. But this aspect has so successfully insinuated itself into the title of the book and into the preface that it is impossible to ignore.

Mr. O'Faolain's essays were intended originally as a simple "informative review" of a literary period, but, as their author says, a theme began to assert itself. This theme was, "that the central assumption of the contemporary novel . . . is the virtual disappearance from fiction of that focal character of the classical novel, the conceptual Hero." He has been replaced by the "anti-Hero," or "the tortured Martyr." The only places where the anti-Hero does not dominate today are the territories of the "Cowboy and the Private Eye." The latter contention concludes the book and tempts one to surmise tangentially that Mr. O'Faolain is not very familiar with either Cowboys or Private Eyes. He might well have reversed his thesis and proven his point more amusingly.

REAL trouble begins, however, when one tries to identify the traditional hero. Mr. O'Faolain, for instance, says that the hero is a "purely social creation. He represents, that is to say, a socially approved norm, for representing which to the satisfaction of society he is decorated with a title. The traditional novel . . . had always moved about this socially acceptable character, so that even when he was not visibly present . . . a form of lip service was given to his hovering spirit by at least a final, formal admission that 'crime does not pay.' The Hero was on the side of the long arm of the law, the *Sûreté,* the church, the kirk, the headmaster and the head of the family. He was on the side of Squire Allworthy, Mr. John Knightley, Père Goriot, Mrs. Proudie and Sherlock Holmes, or at least he was after he had been permitted a certain license to roam in order to entertain us. . . . Naturally some of the best novelists always kicked against this social convention, much to the satisfaction of the reading public and to the annoyance of the social critics; as happened to Scott when he wrote *Rob Roy* about a freebooter and Fielding when he wrote *Tom Jones* about a rascal."

The multifarious contradictions his own examples suggest are a fair indication of the nature of the problem. If the hero began his rascally decline with Tom Jones then Dean Moriarity in Kerouac's *On the Road* would seem to have brought him full circle. And Marjorie Morningstar would seem to have her prototype in Pamela—virtuous ladies who manage to retreat and advance simultaneously. A clue to the speciousness of any concept of the hero as a socially approved norm lies in Mr. O'Faolain's own statement of the case. Such a hero must be "permitted a certain license to roam in order to entertain us." "Naturally some of the best novelists always kicked against this social convention, much to the satisfaction of the reading public." This, however, has been the history of the novel. "Socially approved norms" don't make good reading, however lamentable a reflection this may be on our own secret proclivities or on our own dullness.

WHAT IT comes down to, perhaps, is a need to re-examine the concept of the hero in the novel. The novel is, after all, a modern genre, now a mere two hundred years old, with the exception of a few literary flukes which bob up before that time, and the precursive types, such as the French romances and their English counterparts, a scattering of short stories which might be called novels, and some journalistic curiosa. But the novel itself strode onto the literary scene in the person of that rascal Tom—Tom and a number of equally robust contemporaries. It is not enough to say that the hero returns to the bosom of conventional behavior for the fadeout. By that time he has palled pretty thoroughly. He is tired. Tired and *beat.* The modern switch—and you could say that Mr. O'Faolain is quite right here—is that the modern hero starts out beat. Art usually takes a bow to public piety, which doesn't vary much from generation to generation. Even poor mad Dean Moriarity shuffles out apathetic and silent. The bow to piety is in part the price of publication and in part the simple fact that the artist is very apt to share substantially in whatever public piety is currently going.

In mid-Victorian England, though nowhere else, the notion of the hero as the socially approved norm may have had some basis. The result is an object lesson. The effect is exemplified in Dickens, where the socially approved "hero" tends to fade almost invisibly into the

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background. Who remembers the "heroes" of *Bleak House* or *Dombey and Son?* Their names are Allan Woodcourt and Walter Gay. They serve the hero's functions as socially approved norms. They step forward with the heroine at the end to "announce a mutual passion" and raise, in three-line summary, large families of socially approved norms. One can say, with considerable justification, that these vague figures are not really the heroes of Dicken's novels. But then, who qualifies? Lady Dedlock, perhaps, who was not a socially approved norm and suffered most picturesquely as a result? Esther Summerson, who manages, indeed, to be a socially approved norm along with being one of literature's really classic bores? Florence Dombey, who is almost as colorless as her male counterpart? David Copperfield falls into a special category, but even he is a pretty pale persimmon beside Mr. Micawber or Steerforth or Uriah Heep or even Little Em'ly.

THE TRUTH of the matter is that the novel is perfectly capable of sustaining itself without a hero in any usual sense of the word. Aristotle's preeminently commonsensical notes on the hero of tragic drama are still largely relevant today; but they are of only partial pertinence to the novel, if for no other reason than that the tragic novel is a rarity, and what there is of it is almost entirely a Russian product. The novel is by its nature diffuse in its effects and ordinarily much more complex (if not necessarily more profound) in its ideas and its emotions than the drama. These differences exist for obvious psychological and mechanical reasons. The novel is protean and its hero is protean. It has always resisted the generalizing, the categorizing impulse, and so have its personnae.

The hero has the same sort of durability as the novel itself and the same delightful capacity for popping up in droll and unexpected disguises. Most of these disguises are well worn—patched and dyed to suit their author's purposes. The hero as swashbuckler is now in rather bad hands, but he sells in the millions in historical novels. The hero as martyr, or rebel, or anti-hero is, by Mr. O'Faolain's own admission, not a newcomer: ". . . surely the rebellious anti-Hero who is all over modern fiction must have been enormously encouraged to parade himself by the image of the arrogant revolt of Stephen Daedalus? The twenties were ripe for just such a leader. . . . The anti-Hero . . . goes back a long way. From Don Quixote onward he has gone on reappearing in many guises: to think of a few at random, as Adolphe, Julien Sorel, Frederic Moreau, Raskolnikov, almost any of Hemingway's lone wolves, de Rastignac, the son in *Fathers and Sons;* he is the basis of *Les Faux-Monnayeurs;* he turns up in Duhamel, Romain Rolland, Marcel Aymé; Waugh poked fun at or through him; Greene introduced him to God; he is any of Miss Bowen's doomed heroines; he is all over Moravia's work; in Bloch, and Musil, and Svevo. But the list is endless. He will probably always be with us now, or as long as youth believes in individual sincerity and Ibsen's damned compact majority seems to betray it."

Of course, this is all very true, but this is an account, not of the novel of the twenties or even since the twenties, but of the novel in its whole historical sweep. Some sort of dubious case might be made for giving the twenties over to the anti-Hero. He's still around, though languishing. He was replaced in the thirties by something that could only be described as the Hero as Schlemiel, a spindly-legged oaf who was always getting beaten up by company finks or picking cranberries and wondering "Why? Why?" In Russian literature this type has now been replaced by a broad-bottomed starry-eyed creature who has Exceeded His Quota and doesn't have to wonder why.

HEROES have their fads. Currently the nostril-flaring anti-Hero is very much out of fashion. For a terrible moment it looked as though we were going to have a new and formidable variety of anti-Hero as exemplified in the work of Miss Ayn Rand. No one has followed up her lead, however, and Miss Rand is, by her own admission, more a thinker than a novelist. In a way it is a pity. The world would be a richer place for a few more heroes such as Miss Rand's John Galt. This Randian hero-type is tall and blond and icy-eyed and he speaks "steadily" or "evenly." "Abandon Colorado and the Southwest," he said steadily. "I will stop the motor of the world," he said evenly. All too many of our contemporary crop of heroes squeak.

The British, before they turned Angry, were Squeakers. Some of them still Squeak Angrily; Kingsley Amis melted into John Osborne. The spindly creature of the thirties melted into the politically indifferent un-Hero who goes to Mexico and gets drunk. The hero is the author's most exciting challenge. The question that confronts him is, What can he make effectively heroic? The history of literature is the history of new triumphs in this direction—the direction, perhaps, not so much of *making* heroic, but of revealing heroic potentialities. Not all efforts are successful. A few years ago a number of talents tried to depict the Hero as Psychotic Case Study. It didn't work. But it had been done before and it will be done again. And another generation will have its Angry Young Men and its Heroes as Clowns and its icy-eyed blonds and its beautiful young ladies struggling with virtue. And the test of their success will be the sensation of having met a new Hero. The novel may indeed some day die because it is a creation of man's ingenuity and is subject to the common vicissitudes, but the Hero is a creature of man's heart and will last as long as that singularly durable organ does.

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MORE ON PRATO

IN A RECENT column on the Prato affair, I said I did not believe an American court would find the Bishop guilty of libel because under our system so much emphasis is placed on "freedom of the pulpit" and ecclesiastical independence.

In the meantime an interesting discussion of the case has appeared in the *Harvard Law Record.* I gather from the Harvard discussion that under American law the clergy enjoys a "conditional privilege" to say things about an individual which would normally be deemed legal "slander." The conditions are that the statements be made without malice and in the course of the clergyman's discharge of his duty. One Harvard author holds that it is practically impossible to establish "malice" in such cases; he would add as a further condition that the "slanderous" statement must not be publicized by the one making it beyond the normal range of his pastoral authority.

A surprising number of people find a legal doctrine like this hard to take. When I consider how it might be abused, I do too. But I think it is a wise doctrine, for it puts teeth into the principle of Church-State separation. It means that, under our system, the State does not stand in judgment on religion's prophetic function and permits the widest range of freedom for the churches—which, though they exist within the larger political community, are to a very high degree independent of it. The privileges the American clergy enjoys may be abused outrageously—as freedom of the press and freedom of speech are; they may indeed be enjoyed in some cases by charlatans and scoundrels. But these hazards are small enough price to pay for freedom of religion, the institution they protect.

Whatever dangers may lurk in our law, they are nothing compared to the peril that would be involved in making a religious leader subject to civil judgment in such matters. I would be deathly afraid of a legal system that would have found the the Bishop guilty—not because I particularly approve of what he did or because I agree that people should be called by name from the pulpit but because a law that would presume to determine how a religious leader should lead would be full of danger for the free society.

So much for the legal aspects. But what about the use of personal denunciation and branding of individual sinners in the pulpit? People wrote to me after that first column appeared and asked, What do you have to say about that?

I will tell them. I think that however appropriate such procedures may have been in the past, they now belong to another age. We have learned a great deal about individual dignity, the right of privacy and respect for individual conscience since the days when sinners were publicly denounced. The theologians still regard concubinage as a "public crime," but even in a Catholic country like Italy an additional case of it does not usually represent any new danger to public morality, except in the most remote sense. I think it is generally better for the Church to observe the utmost privacy in expressing concern for its wayward children.

In the current issue of *America* there is an editorial taking the American press to task for its sensational treatment of Lana Turner's love letters to the slain Johnny Stompanato. *America* says—quite properly, I think—that Miss Turner's checkered career by no means robs her of her right to privacy. This whole question of the "'right to privacy" may be a fairly new legal concept but it has certainly long been reflected in the safeguards with which the Church surrounds the Sacrament of Penance. Perhaps it should be given even more canonical consideration.

Of course, a man can sacrifice his right to privacy by being a threat to the public welfare. He has no right then to demand that his sins be kept secret. And a Catholic can threaten the public welfare of the Church, either by misleading the Catholic people about doctrine or by somehow giving the impression that his own misdeeds are done with the approval of ecclesiastical authority. In such cases, public condemnation would seem to be called for. Perhaps that was the situation in Prato.

But what seemed to bother many of my correspondents was the possibility that any defense of the Bishop's legal right in this case might turn out to be an open sesame to the clergy of America to go on a name-calling rampage.

I think their fears are misplaced. The denunciation by name of parishioners is almost unheard of in this country. If the light of individual virtue is not always kept under a bushel, the shame of individual sins is rarely revealed.

The sense of privacy is so strong in the American people that the pulpit denunciation of individual sinners would only boomerang. It would, above all, create sympathy for the sinner, for everyone, knowing his own spiritual state, would feel threatened by it; his own shortcomings might be next on the exposure list. Moreover, most of us would feel absurdly pharisaical joining in the condemnation of anyone else.

Happily, it just is not a real issue. It does not happen now; it is not likely to happen in the future. The respect for privacy is too deep within us, priests and people alike.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Lourdes: A Poem

by Joseph P. Clancy

I.

Trapped like an idiot in a wilderness of feeling
You hold to faith like Ariadne's thread, reeling

Yourself, a willing catch, to Mary's gaff,
Hearing behind each house the bellowing laugh

And snarl of doubt, the bullheaded man,
Tracing your way through streets without a plan

To the place of vision, besieged by cries
Of peddlers hawking pastel lies

For worship, the gaudy pornographs of piety,
Maries parading their virginity,

Simpering Christs, their lavish blood
Incredible. These men know a good

Thing when they see one. Within the gate
Is silence and a statue. Kneel and wait.

II.

From first to last she was just herself.
At fourteen a small, scrawny child,
Dull but gentle, who could not learn
Her catechism. In the hut that had been a jail

There was never enough to eat. The children
Hunted old iron, rags, and bones,
And so, that February day, were by
The river, and in a cave she saw

"A girl no bigger than myself."
So it started. The lady, asked, said
"I am the Immaculate Conception."
She did not know the words. She did not

Recognize the picture and the statues,
Was shocked by all except an old
Byzantine Madonna. For two months
She met the lady. Stubborn, stupid,

To those who threatened or cajoled
She held to what she saw, would take
No money. Then the end of visits.
From mud the trickle of clear water.

From then until her death, nothing
Remarkable happened. They sent her
To school. She could not learn.
The Sisters took her. She bore

The Superior's unkindness and the flow
Of visitors. She cried at times.
She said nothing memorable, gathered
No followers, was not ascetic,

Fanatic, prophetic, worked no miracles.
She prayed. She bore the daily bother.
Priez pour moi, pauvre pècheresse.
She was always a child. She is a saint.

III.

The river's spate
A rush of air
Motionless leaves
And a girl in white
Young and ageless
In the cave's mouth
Smiling O smiling

Bare rock beneath
Bare knees strain
To soar in prayer
Hands sane and sure
To the candle flame
Eyes dwell
On the cave's mouth

Three secrets and
The rose bush bare
Drink and wash
At the spring the hidden
Water wells
The girl in white
Smiles and is gone

IV.

Waiting in the train for the long day's ride
To Paris, you look beyond the river to the spires
And the kneeling masses. Stretchers and wheelchairs line

The platform. You marvel at the doubt or faith
Or gambler's fling that drives them to this place,
And turn from so much stricken flesh. A saint

Would see Christ crucified behind each painful mask.
The nails within the leprous skin, the spastic's grasp
At nothing, the frozen spine, the idiot's laugh.

That girl is an uncomfortable saint. Because
Of her, you cannot hide behind your awe
Your failure to be holy. Love is all

You need. You need to love enough. The gift
Is yours at birth. The other gifts restrict
The vision. That jealous nun who hissed

Une paysanne grossière sans instruction
Is all of us, the gifted and refined undone
In this child's glory. Saint Bernadette, whose one

Knowledge was of whom to love and why,
Confound my knowledge with your simple sight
And fix my wavering eyes on Paradise.

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THE SCREEN

WITHIN A BUDDING GROVE

I'M NOT SURE why I am so lethargic about the movie version of "Marjorie Morningstar." Milton Sperling has given his film a good production with some nice color photography of New York and environs and with a carefully chosen cast who do their best in portraying the many Jewish characters in Herman Wouk's book. The picture gets off to a good start with Ed Wynn, as Uncle Samson, waddling up the street to join his relatives, who are going to his great-nephew's Bar Mitzvah; and it is interesting to watch the gathering of the family, with Claire Trevor and Everett Sloane as Marjorie's mother and father, and the ceremony itself—as well as the much later Passover dinner to which the mother insists that Marjorie invite one of her admirers.

But as the story progresses it becomes apparent that the only character with any real warmth is Uncle Samson; and his devotion to Marjorie is displayed by Ed Wynn with great feeling. Natalie Wood is very pretty as Marjorie, but the characterization is so thin that she doesn't have to do much else than look sweet and occasionally troubled as an eighteen-year-old with growing pains. Girlish, innocent Marjorie has no difficulty acquiring beaux; her problem is in keeping them at arm's length. The film allows its characters to speak up quite frankly on this subject. Marjorie's best friend, Marsha (Carolyn Jones), sees no reasons for withholding her favors; Sandy, a suitor favored by mama for his well-to-do parents, tries to convince Marjorie that pre-marital sex is a biological necessity; while Noel Airman, Marjorie's own candidate in the race, makes it clear that he considers her inescapably a Shirley (a respectable, middle-class girl looking for marriage), on a course chartered thousands of years ago by Moses and the Ten Commandments. Gene Kelly gives an excellent portrayal of this Jewish man in his thirties, who, like Marjorie, changed his name as a sort of half-denial of his heritage; he's a songwriter, a drifter, when Marjorie first meets him in a summer resort in the Catskills, and it looks for a while as if Marjorie will be able to win him on her terms. But back in New York, Noel settles down to a job with an ad agency and Marjorie is so infatuated that she succumbs to his blandishments—only to to be disillusioned when she sees the real Noel.

"Marjorie Morningstar" is perhaps the longest movie ever made that is mainly concerned with one girl's virtue, and the subject becomes more than a little tiresome. Lacking the bite of Herman Wouk's novel, the script by Everett Freeman gives the plot and most of the characters a once-over-lightly treatment; and Director Irving Rapper, dealing with an atmosphere in which practically all the characters are Jewish, carefully avoids any satire that could possibly be labeled anti-Semitic. Some of the episodes have a pleasant humor and nice dignity (there's a brilliant scene in which Marjorie's mother cross-questions irresponsible Noel as a prospective suitor), but the picture seems superficial. Perhaps the trouble is that the people around Marjorie are more interesting than Marjorie, (although the same could be said of David Copperfield) and while Natalie Wood only looks good in her role, Gene Kelly, Ed Wynn and others, including Marty Milner as the playwright, who carries a torch from beginning to end, come to life as real people. Or

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perhaps some of the flatness of the film is due to the fact that the story does not follow through to Wouk's conclusion. Ending abruptly when Marjorie sees Noel for the shallow playboy he really is, the movie omits the fifteen-year-later epilogue showing the gray Shirley that Marjorie Morgenstern became.

THE FRENCH have also made a picture about a girl's growth to maturity, but "Mitsou," which has a second title: "How Understanding Comes to Young (French) Girls," isn't meant to be taken seriously. Attempting to be a racy and sophisticated comedy, "Mitsou" tries so hard that it makes even sex seem dull. Based on a Colette story that is reminiscent of *Gigi* but has none of its delicacy, this movie is about a foolish young singer in a cheap Paris music hall during World War I. As the mistress of a wealthy, middle-aged industrialist, she's complacent about love and life until she falls head-over-heels in love with a young soldier who makes her realize what a vulgar nincompoop she is. She berates her wealthy industrialist for not educating her in the art of living; he obligingly has her tutored and then steps aside when she runs off to her handsome young war hero.

Although "Mitsou" effectively puts over the point that there's more to life than sex, Director Jacqueline Audry handles her cast as if she didn't really believe it herself. In the lead roles, Danielle Delorme, in a series of revealing costumes, Fernand Gravey as the industrialist, and François Guerin as the young soldier act less like real people than characters intent on shocking an audience.

GIRLS in Germany, during World War II and the post-war period, had their problems too, as is shown in "Fraulein," an American film handsomely photographed in CinemaScope and De Luxe Color in Germany. Although this picture is well acted, particularly by Dana Wynter as the suffering German girl and Mel Ferrer as the American major with whom she later falls in love, the story is such a sad, sordid soap opera that it becomes soggy long before its hopeful finale. Poor Dana has an awful time as one dire event follows another. She hasn't seen her fiancé (Helmut Dantine) for two years when her father is killed in Cologne during the last weeks of the war. She is staying in Berlin with a cousin and his nasty Nazi boarders when the Russians take over. She refuses to become the mistress of the Russian officer (Theodore Bikel), who saves her from lascivious attackers, and flees to the American zone, where she works on a rock pile. Later she escapes from the same nasty boarders (now ex-Nazi) who are at this time running a house of prostitution. Then noble Mel rescues her from still another degrading job. Needless to say Dana is disillusioned, unhappy and bitter by the time Mel offers her marriage and America. A trip down the Rhine is supposed to put you in a romantic mood before the finale, but by this time not even the Lorelei could have done much to raise my spirits.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

CEREMONY OF INNOCENCE

MRS. CLARE BOOTHE LUCE'S "Child of the Morning," for all its high ardor of sanctity, suffers by being almost wholly the fruit of insistence, of a conscious effort of the will to do the work of the imagination. In her central instance, that of the example of the canonized Maria Goretti, Mrs. Luce has imagined with a curious yet often arresting security. She has had the ambition to translate this elemental substance, with its ancient Latin motifs of passionate rage and chastity and desire, into the sleazy milieu—ostensibly Irish-Catholic, incontrovertibly hysterical—of lower-class contemporary Brooklyn: a Brooklyn, moreover, complete with switchblades, marijuana, and various kinds of delinquency. It is an exotic impulse, and startling in a figure of Mrs. Luce's sophisticated sense of reality; indeed, the want of authenticity in "Child of the Morning" is a constant distress. The playwright has documented this dreary religious patois and haggling with energy but a very uncertain taste, and even in this theater season of familial recrimination and abuse, Mrs. Luce's raucous egotists are noisily distinguished. One is troubled, moreover, throughout the whole of "Child of the Morning," with that cool stress we would call elsewhere shrewd technical guile: it is deployed here with a dismaying ruthlessness sadly at odds with the lyrical and somber nature of Mrs. Luce's subject.

What does emerge as the strength of "Child of the Morning" is a sense, always impressive and sometimes delicately numinous, of sanctity, of nature healed and perfected by grace. Mrs. Luce has invested the motif with conviction as well as deep feeling, and though her Brooklyn mystic seemed often to me rather too complacently "normal"—without reticence or removal, full of that dreadfully jaunty American cheer—the figure is nonetheless a considerable creation, and Mrs. Luce is to be honored for encompassing such difficult matter within her talent. One wishes she might assume the theme again, embodying it in a milieu rather more temperamentally congenial, and more accessible to her perception. One caution only: Mrs. Luce, no less than many another dramatist assaying religious experience as a subject, hovers close to the vulgar error that sanctity

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must somehow be demonstrated, justified in its effects or spiritual utility. Hence the rash of desperate insights, "conversions," offensive smears of moralism which mark the wild finale of "Child of the Morning." They leave a sour taste in the mind, for all their (cheaply) dramatic shock. Sanctity is the highest state of the soul, but as a value—in the human sense—it is no more to be "proved" than beauty or love or truth: it is, with them, a grace irrevocably passing, the impalpable breath and visitation of what will forever elude the reach of our knowing. To insist on more is a deep impertinence.

Mr. Dennis Gurney directs this Blackfriars production with his customary energy, a matter too often of taking the cash and letting the credit go. He allows some moments of tenderness to Miss Helen Fox as the young mystic, but in the main, he has imposed on the play the wrong kind of emphasis and almost no restraint at all. *(At Blackfriars.)*

RICHARD HAYES.

Letters on "The Lay Professor"

Oscar W. Perlmutter's article "The Lay Professor" in the April 11th Education Issue has aroused considerable discussion. A representative selection from the letters we have received follows.

THE EDITORS.

Omaha, Neb.

TO THE EDITORS: Oscar W. Perlmutter's "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11] struck a responsive chord in this reader's breast—partly because he was championing the cause of the lay teacher (misery loves company, and collectively we are a great bunch of wound-lickers) and partly because many of the things that the author said about the situation in the Catholic colleges are true. But after my immediate emotional reaction had been recollected in tranquility, I began to wonder whether Mr. Perlmutter had not, on one point at least, overstated his case.

After quoting the young professor who felt that the layman in the Catholic college was "unwanted, unpaid, uncared for, and unpersoned," Mr. Perlmutter remarked that this professor's disgruntlement was "an accurate index of the state of mind of lay professors throughout the country." It is this latter generalization that I should like to question, even if I cannot confute it.

If, as Mr. Perlmutter claims, the layman is treated as a second-class citizen; if the layman has cause to feel that he is *in* the family but not *of* it; if the layman is not granted equality of opportunity with the religious members of the academic community; if the layman is denied "the right to participate effectively in the formulation and implementation of basic policy"; then I would be willing to grant that the young professor's malcontent was not only justified, but was most probably representative of the general sentiment of the lay teachers across the country. But does the situation as Mr. Perlmutter describes it really prevail in our Catholic colleges in this year of our Lord 1958?

Undoubtedly there are still *some* Catholic colleges in the country where the lay professor is treated as a second-class citizen. And those colleges would do well to heed Mr. Perlmutter's caveats, because when the teachers' market finally establishes itself those colleges are going to find it difficult to attract and to hold good lay teachers. I feel too that the situation as Mr. Perlmutter describes it *did* prevail in our Catholic colleges until as recently as ten years ago. But a great many changes have taken place in our Catholic colleges within a decade.

Anyone who has been on the faculty of a Catholic college during these last ten years can testify to many improvements: salaries have increased enormously (in some cases as much as one hundred per cent); a new respect for scholarship has manifested itself; a genuine concern for academic standards has appeared; the autocratic dean or department chairman has either disappeared or become remarkably democratic; an eagerness to communicate with colleagues in secular schools has developed; and more and more laymen have been appointed as deans and department heads.

Out of curiosity I checked the catalogues of six representative Catholic colleges. I was amazed at the percentage of laymen who occupy administrative positions. I can speak more knowingly of the situation at my own university. Five of the six deans of the schools in our university are laymen; eleven of our eighteen departmental chairmen are laymen; laymen are represented on every financial, academic, or administrative committee in the University. Nor is the position of these laymen merely titular. Their judgments and proposals are invoked and acted upon. By hearsay and by observation, I know that this same situation prevails at a number of other Catholic universities.

I would feel more comfortable about challenging Mr. Perlmutter's appraisal of the present situation, if I had made a survey of *all* the Catholic colleges and universities. Maybe Mr. Perlmutter made such a survey before he wrote his article. If he has, I will tip

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my hat to him and retire to the back of the room. But until Mr. Perlmutter presents some documentary proof for his appraisal, I feel at liberty to challenge that appraisal. At the same time, I encourage frank criticism of our schools. The rash of criticism that has been appearing recently from *within our ranks* is a healthy sign of our coming of age. By challenging only a single proposition in Mr. Perlmutter's article and by presenting another side of the picture, I seek merely to redress the balance.

EDWARD P. J. CORBETT,
Creighton University.

Chicago, Ill.

TO THE EDITORS: As a layman who has studied many years at both Catholic and secular universities, and who has taught for several years in Catholic schools, may I protest that Oscar W. Perlmutter's article in your April 11 special Education issue does not give the position of "The Lay Professor" as I see it.

Of course, many lay scholars at Catholic institutions have grievances, just as scholars have objections to administrative policy in secular institutions. But I have never found that the layman was regarded as a "second class citizen" by the religious on the faculty, although sometimes poor qualifications and lack of productivity of the laymen often justify such an attitude. In most cases laymen are given a full share in the deliberation of policy, and frequently become departmental chairmen.

Academic salaries are too low everywhere, but on the junior level are probably higher in Catholic schools that in secular institutions—this in spite of the fact that it is almost impossible to finance Catholic colleges. By and large, professors are treated with more consideration in Catholic schools than in non-Catholic. We laymen owe a debt of gratitude to the religious orders for their zeal, generosity and intellectual integrity that we can never repay. It is time we at least called a halt to the destructive criticism contained in sweeping anticlerical attacks on Catholic education..

FRANKLIN A. WALKER,
Loyola University.

Norwalk, Calif.

TO THE EDITORS: Mr. Perlmutter's article, "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11], is a well done and timely piece. There can be little doubt that the wall of separation is one of the most important causes of the low estate of Catholic scholarship.

I taught for a while in a Catholic high school; while the experience was enjoyable, albeit penurious, I had the definite feeling of superfluity. Faculty meetings were held on Sunday in the monastery and no invitations were extended to the lay faculty.

Recently I traveled to a city in the northern part of

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California as a delegate to the American Federation of Teachers convention. While there I called on several of my friends who teach in the various Catholic colleges of the community. What started as a social evening rapidly turned into a question and answer session as to how they could form a union in the colleges of their employment. It soon became evident that we were holding an academic discussion, as my friends the professors were certain that any attempt at organization on their part would result in their being fired.

Their zeal and devotion to Catholic higher education were edifying if not saddening. As a public school teacher (secondary), I was making far more than they were and not working half the hours. My only question was how effective they were as teachers while they were worrying about the hungry mouths at home.

On the cheerful side may I mention Immaculate Heart College in Hollywood. The sisters are making a genuine attempt to break down the barrier of the cloth. They are doing all within their power to pay a living wage and are sincerely concerned with the problem of the lay professor.

WILLIAM C. O'DONNELL, JR.

Chicago, Ill.

TO THE EDITORS: Mr. Perlmutter has eminently succeeded in his purpose to be "constructive as well as provocative" in his fine article, "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11].

The principal evil of which he speaks, viz., authoritarian domination of education by religious administrators, is particularly unfortunate for a law school. For it is ironic that a faculty dedicated to the teaching of democratic procedures and independent thinking should themselves be denied in their professional association, any semblance of "participation in power." I submit the proposition without argument that lay lawyers are, in the nature of things, better qualified than religious administrators to pass upon policies coordinated with professional competence and needs, and to represent the law school "at public meetings and sundry academic functions."

It is hopeful to note that some university administrations have for some time been approaching an apparent accord with this proposition. This may be indicated by the gradual obsolescence of the institution of a religious "regent" at Catholic law schools. The specific situation with which I am most familiar, however, is that of Loyola University of Chicago. Here the university administration allows complete autonomy to the full-time lay faculty of the law school in such important matters as faculty appointments, library objectives, teaching loads, curricula, etc. In faculty appointments and in cases where money appropriations are required, law faculty decisions are, of course, in the form of recommendations, but over some years the university administrators have unfailingly accepted such recommendations except when non-acceptance was necessitated by financial limitations.

Mr. Perlmutter's dark picture should be touched up by such rays of hope as the above, which give promise that our Catholic universities may have within themselves the self-critical potential and good will to brighten the situation in the not too distant future.

RICHARD V. CARPENTER,
Professor of Law.

Rensselaer, Ind.

TO THE EDITORS: It was with considerable interest that I read Mr. Perlmutter's forthright article "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11]. In the light of the controversy that has been going on for some three or four years on "Catholics and the Intellectual Life" it is rather surprising that so little attention has been focused on the status of the lay professor in our Catholic colleges and universities. Be that as it may, it is high time to submit to intelligent discussion a problem that has not yet received the full measure of attention that it deserves.

It is not my intent to express an open and uncritical acceptance of everything that the author sets forth in his article. However, I do feel that the "three rights" he outlines are unexceptionable. As one who has been teaching for over twelve years in our Catholic schools, I have had no trouble in identifying myself as being at times what the author characterizes as a "second class" citizen. However, I am now teaching at a school (St. Joseph's College, Indiana) where the lay faculty are "first class" citizens in deed and in truth. On the score of "equal opportunity" it is to be said that the lay faculty here has (in comparison with some Catholic schools) an effective, practical role in the formation and execution of the deliberative affairs of the College. On the score of opportunities for research, the salary scales are so arranged as not to make summer-school teaching a matter of practical necessity. Finally, as for the salary scale itself, I need only add that it goes considerably beyond the proposals suggested by the author.

Beyond these features there are others that might bear mention, but enough has been said to indicate that at least one of our Catholic institutions (and there are more, I suspect) has taken on a role of effective, dynamic leadership in an area that has been so long neglected. With a full sense of the complexity of the problems involved, it is my fond hope that other Catholic institutions will soon follow suit. Any serious efforts along these lines will redound to the over-all benefit of Catholic education itself where the active collaboration of clergy and laity alike is a matter of paramount importance.

ROBERT J. KREYCHE.

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Robert Graves: Cranky, Malicious and Entertaining

FIVE PENS IN HAND. By Robert Graves. Doubleday. $5.

By ANTHONY BAILEY

AS MR. GRAVES remarks in his prologue to *Goodbye to All That* (which has recently been published in this country in a revised Anchor paperback edition), the title has became a catchword and his sole contribution to Bartlett's *Dictionary of Familiar Quotations*. It is not his sole contribution to letters, as most people will recognize, glancing at their libraries; it is, however, perhaps the best book he has ever written and, judging from *Five Pens in Hand*, a new collection of essays, poems, and stories, perhaps the best book he ever will write. What makes it so is not merely the style—a matchless understatement of rebellion and disgust—but the candor and the descriptive honesty which informs almost every page of it. When *Goodbye to All That* first appeared in 1929, the reviewers were quick to seize on the fact that Graves was surprisingly unembittered. There is little malice or self-pity. He had provided, moreover, in his account of growing up, of school, and of his military experience in the first World War and then the aftermath, a perfect record of a generation whose roots in life were almost severed.

His great-uncle was Leopold von Ranke. His paternal grandfather was the Protestant Bishop of Limerick; his father's mother Scottish. His father descended from a French knight who landed with Henry VII in 1485, was an inspector of schools, an amateur poet, and generally ignored his children. Graves himself, when riding in his pram, was often patted on the head and kissed by Swinburne—"he was an inveterate pram-stopper and patter and kisser"—but the first distinguished writer he remembers meeting was P. G. Wodehouse. "He gave me a penny, advising me to get marshmallows with it. Though too shy to express my gratitude at the time, I have never since permitted myself to be critical about his work." There must be many writers, some now deceased, who wished they had had the chance to give young Robert a penny to buy marshmallows.

He tells us that he regards his principal calling as poetry; but he has done much to make us think that he has no principal calling at all, unless it be writing, plain and simple. Although, to my knowledge, he has never written a play, a film scenario, or a detective story, he has practised almost every other literary form, and has appeared in the various guises of historical novelist, historian, theologian, social historian, anthropologist, lecturer, literary

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critic, translator, poet. . . . It mightn't be too much to suggest that this confusion of ancestors, with their mixed legacy of Germanic thoroughness and Celtic lyricism, has a lot to do with the published works of Robert Graves. Certainly the pedant and the visionary are highly entangled there.

Five Pens in Hand opens with an essay called "Why I Live in Majorca." He chose the island in the first place because of its climate and low cost of living; because it was country "where the horse plough was not yet an anachronism"; and because England was becoming too mechanized and too crowded. He remains there because it is still, despite tourists, the island Gertrude Stein recommended to him, perfectly tranquil. "Nothing newsworthy ever happens here." The body of the book consists of three lectures (on poetry, scholarship, and The White Goddess), several reviews of books that interest him (the Pandora myth, the Arthurian legend, the birth of Christianity, etc.), twenty-seven stories, "Mostly funny," and indeed, they are; finally, some poems, mostly good. From the lectures and reviews we learn, among other things, that "the Church Fathers were dead right when they pointed out the analogy between Pandora in Hesiod's *Works and Days* and Mother Eve in *Genesis*"; that "the concept of the supernatural is the disease of religion. True religion is of natural origin and linked practically with the seasons. . ."; and that the sort of English most suitable for a translation of *The Odyssey* is that of Charlotte Bronte's *The Spell.*

Although he lays himself open to the easy scoff, there is a good deal of cranky common sense in Graves —apart from the fact that he is an entertaining writer. What is annoying is his malice, which, if it did not appear in *Goodbye to All That,* certainly comes out in any discussion of poetry and poets: his recent review in the N.Y. *Times* of Roy Campbell's *Collected Poems* was not only malicious but sadly petty. It is further true that Graves' anthropologico-religious obsession seems, in many odd ways, to have got in the way of "the ancient, intuitive language of poetry" whose priest and spokesman he hopes to be. If only, one sometimes wishes, he was but a poet! For his poetry does have a gnarled and crabby charm and wisdom. He becomes, in fact, a major poet when the bully-boy manner is fully under control, and the didactic and the lyric are well-blended, as they are, for instance, in "Vanity."

The best of the Georgian poets? No, he is far more than that. A cantankerous, insular exile? Well, his stories show an appreciation of the quirks and passions of modern life, whether in rural Majorca or suburban England. Moreover, reading *Goodbye to All That,* one wonders that Graves or for that matter any who stood the trenches of France for two, three, and four years, have managed to exist at all in the twentieth century.

Robert Graves himself was in Wales at the time the armistice was announced. Then, for the first time, he allowed himself emotion. "The news sent me out walking alone along the dyke above the marshes of Rhuddlan (an ancient battlefield, the Flodden of Wales), cursing and sobbing and thinking of the dead.

Siegfried [Sassoon]'s famous poem celebrating the Armistice began:

> Everybody suddenly burst out singing,
> As I was filled with such delight
> As prisoned birds must find in freedom . . .

But 'everybody' did not include me."

Cardinal Wolsey

NAKED TO MINE ENEMIES. By Charles W. Ferguson. Little, Brown. $6.

By ELIZABETH BARTELME

CHARLES FERGUSON has produced in *Naked to Mine Enemies* an exhaustive, psychologically sound and, for the most part, successful study of Thomas Wolsey, the Cardinal-minister who, in the name of Henry VIII, ruled the English Church and State from his appointment as Lord Chancellor in 1515 until his swift and ruinous fall in 1529. No English minister ever possessed such absolute power as Wolsey; no one sought it more assiduously. The daemon that possessed him was relentless; yet as Ferguson shows, it was neither uncommon, nor one that defies analysis.

Born the son of an Ipswich wool merchant in 1471, Wolsey escaped early from the possibility of obscurity through what his biographer points out was the only avenue open to a boy of humble origin. He entered Oxford at the age of eleven, was awarded the bachelor's degree at fifteen, and emerged eventually as a Fellow of Magdalen College. Despite a devotion to education which remained constant all his life, Wolsey looked beyond the quiet life of Oxford. At thirty, three years after his ordination, he had become chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury; in 1508 he was named Henry Tudor's Royal Almoner. At Henry VIII's accession to the throne, Wolsey was prepared to lift the cares of State from his shoulders. "Accustomed to advancement through the simple and unfailing expedient of pleasing his superiors by doing their work, he made a perfect companion for the young King."

And Wolsey knew how to work. Certainly his rise to power was dictated by inordinate ambition linked with political brilliance. But it was not on brilliance alone that he depended as he reached out to draw into his hands each strand that formed the web of his power. Again and again Mr. Ferguson calls attention to Wolsey's absorption in detail. It was one of his more characteristic traits and he applied it with an intensity that would have broken a less single-minded man. As King's Almoner he could account for every cask of beer in the realm. When he stage-managed the spectacular Field of Cloth of Gold meeting of Henry VIII and Francis I of France, he knew the exact number of sheep, calves and pounds

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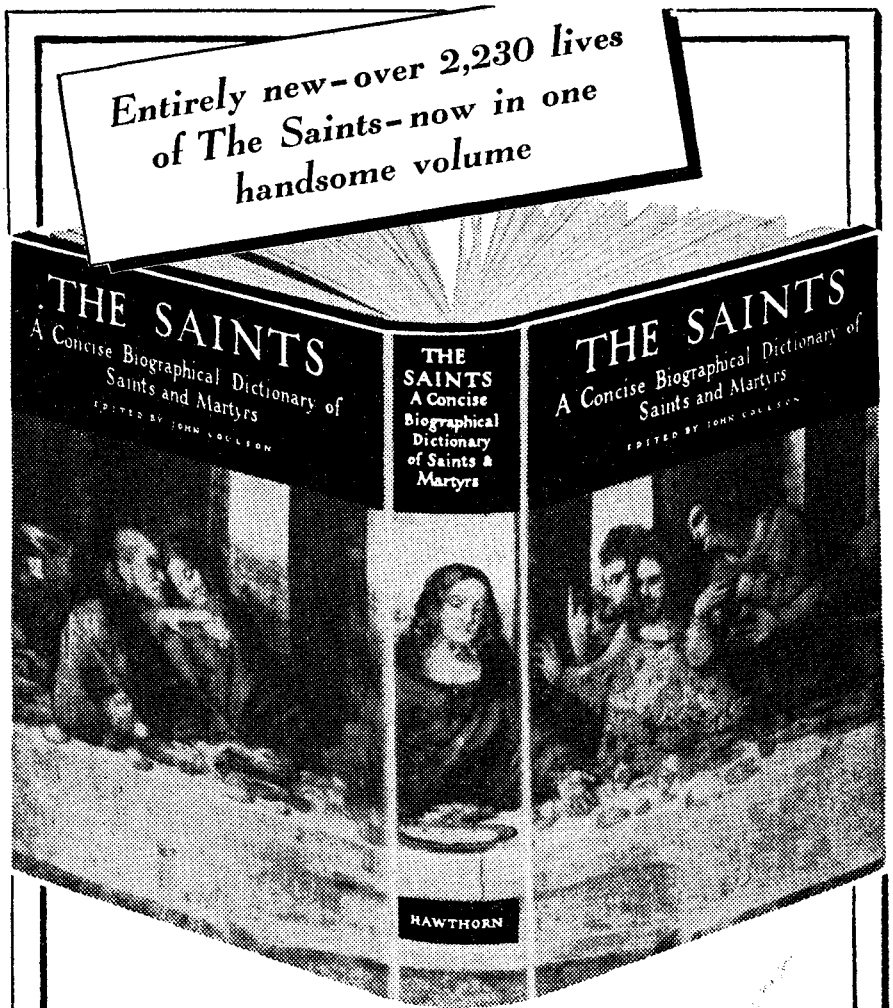
of candle wax that had been transported across the Channel. In the court of the Star Chamber he sat as judge, listening to grievances and meting out a personal kind of justice. Throughout his ascendancy, and with the huge framework of English government and Church administration resting solely on him, Wolsey always had time to take care of the most trivial detail. It was at once the basis of his success and, partly, of his undoing.

For Wolsey made enemies. His maneuvering, first for the cardinalate, then for the position of Papal Legate, although shameless might have been forgiven had he not misused his powers. But he could not resist usurping the rights of the bishops and high-handedly meddling in diocesan and monastic affairs. At court he was detested by the nobility for similar reasons—and for others. His love of pomp and display rivaled even the King's, and he forced obeisance from those who considered themselves his betters.

It is Ferguson's thesis that it was the Cardinal's latent insecurity that drove him to the extremes of power and to the magnificence that characterized his manner of living. His palaces, robes, the ceremony on which he insisted, all bolstered his belief in himself. His friendship with Henry gave him a kind of insurance; his control of the English Church put him above the King. Even when his scheme for securing the papacy failed and he realized that he was not going to get quite the best of both worlds, Wolsey could count his assets and draw assurance from them.

It was here that Wolsey made his mistake. Ferguson accurately diagnoses lack of imagination as one of the Cardinal's great flaws and it is most apparent in Wolsey's blindness to the pre-Reformation currents that were stirring in England. He believed implicitly that he could serve both the King and the Church, and he chose, so Ferguson writes, "to see their interests as at all times identical and his own interests as supreme. This policy he continued indefatigably for years until at last his own interests could be served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by neither and he was compelled to make a bitter choice between the two oaths he had taken."

Mr. Ferguson presents a devastating picture of Wolsey's character, unredeemed by the last sad months when the ill and broken man exchanged his fine woolens for a hairshirt. That his gifts were extraordinary is made amply clear. That he used them in self-interest was his personal tragedy, and, more than that, tragic for the Church in England. For Wolsey irreparably damaged the structure of the English Church and it was he who, by pointing out to Henry the possibilities inherent in the dissolution of the monasteries, set in motion the reshaping of the Church as an instrument of the State.

Mr. Ferguson does not stress this latter point; he is not attempting a history of the Reformation in England. But there are long stretches in this book when one feels that he *is* attempting a social history of the period. Like his subject he is absorbed by details. Certainly a historical biography demands the placing of its subject within the framework of his time, but Mr. Ferguson's book would have been more sharply focused had he edited more heavily than he has.

One cannot quarrel with Mr. Ferguson's careful research, which admits of few errors and those of a minor nature. But stylistically he is hampered by consciously "colorful" writing, by strained figures of speech ("the swish of history as it turned a corner"), by a plethora of adjectives. He has a way of underlining his points to be sure the reader sees what he is getting at; worse, of see-sawing back and forth between a flavoring of Tudor speech and current colloquialisms. When he writes simply and directly he is far more effective.

It is worth noting these points because *Naked to Mine Enemies* is one of those irritating books that is good, but that has the inherent possibilities of being much better. Great historical biography is rare. Mr. Ferguson approaches it, but his control of his writing is not firm enough to put his work in the first rank.

The Disenchanted

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW. By Warren Miller. Little, Brown. $4.

By ROBERT GUTWILLIG

THERE is a fine and exciting new writer among us. His name is Warren Miller, and his very funny and sad novel is called *The Way We Live Now*. It is a more than apt title.

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those of us who still have honest dreams." So on the first page of *The Way We Live Now* Lionel leaves his wife, whom he does not love (and who, more important, is incapable of loving him), and his daughter, whom he loves terribly, takes an apartment in Greenwich Village, and searches desperately, if haphazardly, for love and a way of life.

This is a love story—the twentieth-century kind of love story that has become all too familiar, where adultery has replaced innocence and the only thing guaranteed is an unhappy ending. Lionel's love, Amelia, is a wonderfully convincing and an enchantingly impossible heroine very much in the Scott Fitzgerald manner. To say she is a Daisy Buchanan or a Nicole Warren brought up to date is to take nothing away from Mr. Miller's individual achievement, for all his central characters are brilliantly realized and thoughtfully placed in the mainstream of romantic American fiction—a tradition that appears to have begun with Henry James (of all people) and to have been continued by Stephen Crane, Mark Twain, Fitzgerald, Hemingway, James Gould Cozzens, J. D. Salinger, in fact most of our best writers.

It is perhaps inevitable that Warren Miller be compared (probably unfavorably) to some of these writers, particularly Hemingway and Salinger. Like Hemingway, Mr. Miller is profoundly disenchanted with the way the world is going. His characters no longer believe that the old codes and morals are valid. They invent new ones. "He [Lionel] saw Amelia as his claim on life, his love for her as a kind of clearing in the forest. He saw her as something he had taken for his own; out of a hundred possibilities he had chosen her; and she had selected him. He was responsible to her and she to him. To be responsible to someone, to have someone to answer to, that was the only morality left."

Like Salinger, Mr. Miller makes the equation between truth and beauty. They find them both (as well as innocence) in children, and they portray children wonderfully. Also they share a remarkable ability to capture the way people speak. This is not to say that anyone really speaks the way Mr. Miller's characters do. It is a sort of wish-fulfillment. They go on the way we would like to go on. At times, the stylized grace and comic invention of their manner reminds one of Restoration comedy. ". . . when was it we adopted our language and our manner? And why? I no longer remember. It was, evidently, what we had to do to make the world livable."

Despite the fact that the book is crowded with wild scenes and wilder characters, this is essentially a novel about loneliness. All the characters try very hard to reach each other, but they rarely succeed, and then only fitfully. Lionel thinks, "They are natives of countries other than mine. But who lives in my country? I am a one-man state? The state, chaps, it is I. And whether I speak of love or money, she [his wife] and Pardoe [his boss] will not understand me. Matter of language, buddies. Is a well-known barrier."

The Way We Live Now is not without its faults. Too many of the characters are too physically attractive and too fey; their capacity for alcoholic refreshment is stunning,

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and their sexual exploits are exhausting. They exhausted this reader anyway. At times, there is a certain over-ripeness to the prose, particularly when the author feels called upon to explain things, and this leads his characters into becoming attitudes of self-pity and loathing. Too often Mr. Miller takes the easy way out and satirizes his people and situations. This is entertaining enough and quite fitting when he is being Amanda Vail (author of *Love Me Little*), but he should be more careful to separate his incarnations, for satire seems brittle, false and even irrelevant here. Lastly, the final third of the novel rather sinks, in a dying fall, of its own melancholy weight. But these failings are characteristic of the novel of which this is a particular effort. It is the most difficult and the most rewarding fiction.

Still, *The Way We Live Now* works, and works awfully well. It holds up our lives for us to see, shows them to us clearly and freshly, and suggests a meaning—even in all the meaninglessness and pain and loneliness. This is what the Novel is uniquely meant to do; it can grapple with and make sense and beauty of the chaos of our lives. "Life is not, it would appear, what we would have it be," Mr. Miller says. And he goes on from there.

The Godden Cast

THE GREENGAGE SUMMER. By Rumer Godden. Viking. $3.50.

By ALICE SAXON

WIT BEING the soul of this story, it is, appropriately, wit that gives it brightness and a consistent quality and at the same time limits its power; ease and cleverness predominate, while a sense of the genuine—and a genuine concern on the part of the reader—is forfeited.

But for one more child and different names, the cast of characters is that of Miss Godden's earlier novel, *The River,* even to certain identical speeches. This is curious

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but unobjectionable since the children are still very appealing and so are their speeches. The viewpoint is again that of a pre-adolescent girl placed effectively in the midst of a large family—two little sisters, cherubic and placid, and a whimsical, self-contained little brother (these serve to emphasize her own vanishing serenity) and an older sister of maturing beauty who has passed disturbingly over a threshold before which the younger girl hesitates resentfully and longingly.

The Greengage Summer depicts, as did *The River,* a season of change, significant events, the discovery of good and evil unfathomably mingled, a season of gently inexorable growth. Here it is done through a semi-comical narration by the thirteen-year-old, that takes the children to France on a holiday, divests them suddenly of their mother (through an infected horsefly bite that removes her to a hospital) and leaves them at a hotel in the care of Eliot, a mysterious, gallant Englishman, his jaded girl friend, Mlle. Zizi, who owns the hotel, and her austere assistant, Madame Corbet. The abandoned children come to worship Eliot, who in his role as their temporary guardian is nothing short of dazzling. He develops a faculty, however, for being in more than one place at the same time, and the ultimate revelation that their generous-hearted, impeccably-dressed idol is in reality a professional thief and a murderer all but devastates them.

In *The River* the same theme of discovery and growth emerges naturally, almost organically, out of its own setting, with a quiet, believable dignity that is truly moving. In *The Greengage Summer,* it is a matter of gimmicks; the devices being so extrinsic and so unlikely—even the necessity of removing the children to a foreign habitat in order to introduce them to "life"—that acceptable or not they necessarily reduce the scope and impact of the book.

It will appeal to some as sophisticated fare, because it gets around a fairly tender theme with a light touch. Yet with respect to the vari-

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ous raw elements involved—passion, murder, homosexuality (Zizi loves Eliot but Madame Corbet loves Zizi)—the reader gets neither an adult's treatment nor the vivid observations of a Colette ingénue, and these elements emerge as if from a milk bath, not very alarming or real. That the narrator and protagonists are wide-eyed English children could, of course, have a particular advantage, but this point of view is not notably handled in *The Greengage Summer*, largely because, as happens more often than not, the whole device of the precious, unexpected naiveté of the child is pushed too relentlessly and ardently.

This is not to complain but only to try to place the book carefully in its own category and to offer some resistance to the wrong kind of praise. It *is* in a way delightful, but it is certainly nothing *more* than delightful. It is difficult to say of this kind of book that it is superficial because it is far too knowing, because it avoids superficiality so adequately (it is filled with appropriate profundities and the correct insights into motivations) and yet the total effect is, nevertheless, superficial. At its best it is very funny; at its worst it is never really moving unless one good-naturedly allows oneself conditioned reactions. *The Greengage Summer* would, in fact, make an excellent movie; the plot is symmetrical and picturesque from all angles, and it employs the kind of sensitivity that could be translated to the screen in its entirety without loss or injustice to the original in the process.

Cervantes' Knight

DON QUIXOTE'S PROFESSION. By Mark Van Doren. Columbia University Press. $2.50.

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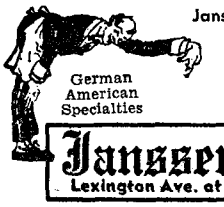

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Knight of the Woeful Countenance has been simplified into a lunatic, sentimentalized into a Romantic Hero, idealized into a Christian Pilgrim. Yet the stream of commentary will flow as long as the book is read, for as Mr. Van Doren writes, *Don Quixote* is both "simple and mysterious . . . the sign of its mysteriousness is that it can be talked about forever."

Mr. Van Doren has not added any bold, original insights to the literature about the novel. The chief virtue of his study lies in the quiet tone, the assured reflections and seemingly casual observations which enrich the development of his argument. When the reader turns, as he should, to *Don Quixote* itself, he will find that his responsiveness to its life, its multifarious meanings have been heightened.

Probably everyone who reads *Don Quixote* finishes the book with an awareness that he has encountered more than he can quite grasp. The impulse to return to the book, to spin theories with which to encompass its breadth, to plumb its depths, is irresistible. There is danger of course, in regarding a work of art as a problem to be solved, an enigma from which to wring some Great Meaning. Mr. Van Doren correctly says that "those who know [*Don Quixote*] best and love it most are the most reluctant . . . to discourse upon the essence of the book at the expense of its being, upon its idea rather than its life."

Yet we want to understand. Mr. Van Doren advances a theory to help us. He suggests that we view Don Quixote as an actor playing a role which he makes up as he goes along. The actor meets situations which more and more test his skill, his understanding of his part, which, in turn, grows in subtlety and depth. He plays it with such wholeness and unshakable resolve that, at last, he becomes the figure he was acting, a noble and valorous knight. "What is the difference," Mr. Van Doren asks, "between acting like a great man and being one?" Yeats put the question with greater resonance: "How can we know the dancer from the dance?"

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This question raises the issue which virtually every commentator has perceived as the central theme of *Don Quixote*: What is reality? So framed, the question has little meaning. Yet Cervantes responds to his theme in so many ways, on so many levels, generating so many possibilities that, in reading, we feel some great discovery awaits just beyond our view. In the end, of course, he provides no answer, says nothing final, gives us nothing but the mirrors of life itself. This is another reason why readers can go on reading and talking about his book.

To illustrate how Don Quixote sets speculation in motion, let us look at two aspects of the novel not taken up in this book. It is commonplace to cite as one facet of Cervantes' treatment of the reality question the occasions where Don Quixote simply mistakes one object for another, as in the episode where he attacks a windmill thinking it is a giant. But it is not as often indicated that Cervantes is dealing with another, related aspect of reality, the question of value. An example: Early in his travels Don Quixote meets a barber who, because of rain, is wearing his basin on his head. The Knight mistakes this basin for the legendary Mambrino's Helmet. Straightway, the Don attacks the barber who flees, leaving the basin which Don Quixote then puts on his own head. When Sancho protests that it is merely a barber's basin, Don Quixote responds: "Do you know what I imagine, Sancho? That this famous part of the enchanted helmet by some strange occurrence fell into the hands of someone who did not recognize nor esteem its value . . . and without knowing what he was doing . . . made this thing that seems, as you say, a barber's basin; but for me who knows what it really is, its transformation is of no importance."

A second point. Professor Van Doren believes that the Knight was aware he was playing a role, aware of the seeming madness of his actions, in a word, that he was sane. Such a view, it may be argued, comes perilously close to sentimentalizing what Cervantes was about.

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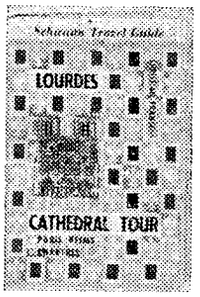

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He wrote with a relentless understanding of his world, with, as one critic expressed it, "the pen of doubt upon the paper of conviction." One must, I think, accept the Don's madness and Cervantes' acceptance of his madness. What Cervantes says is that within his illusion Don Quixote acts with honor and wisdom. But Cervantes finally destroys him by making him sane.

One measure of Cervantes' greatness as a writer is that in the end he makes us believe that he was right in bringing Don Quixote to ultimate defeat by the world. But he introduces a distinction: Don Quixote contends with two worlds. That of the Duke and Duchess, Cervantes meant for us to despise; the Knight's nobility shines through its meanness.

But there is a second world, that of Sancho, the world of commonsensical ignorance, of irreducible earth. This is the world in which the Don's high aspirations, his knightly missions, his plans for righting wrongs lead only to bruises, broken bones and confusion.

Toward the close of the book, the Don lies dying. Sancho, the one who loved him most, weeps. Then comes this sentence: "The house was upset; but with all, the niece continued to eat, the housekeeper to drink and Sancho Panza cheered up; since an inheritance erases or tempers a bit in the heir the memory of the pain which the dead leave behind." The world goes on, perhaps a little happier, when the Don's noble follies are ended. We hear Mistress Quickly tell us that another knight, Falstaff, is dying, and Pistol's words: "Let us condole the knight; for, lambkins, we will live."

REVIEWERS

Anthony Bailey, who is on the staff of the *New Yorker*, is himself both poet and critic.

Elizabeth Bartelme, a regular contributor, is on the staff of a well-known publishing house.

Robert Gutwillig is the author of *After Long Silence*, published this month.

Alice Saxon has previously contributed fiction and reviews to The Commonweal.

Jack Patterson is an editor for a New York publishing house.

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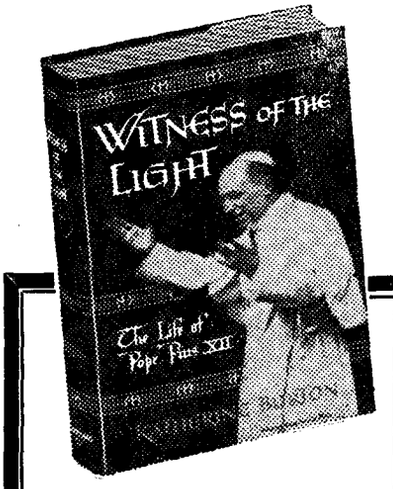

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